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6 Policemen Found To Be Members Of Ku Klux Klan

By Art Petacque

Six Chicago policemen have been found to be members of the Ku Klux Klan, it was disclosed Thursday. A six-foot cross—often used as a fiery symbol of klan terrorism—was found in the home of one of the six.

Police Supt. James B. Conlisk Jr. announced that action is being taken to dismiss the six from the force. Earlier, The Sun-Times exclusively disclosed their affiliation with the racist organization.

Conlisk said a months-long investigation by the police department of klan activities in Chicago pinpointed the klan connections of the police.

Klan spokesman in Georgia says "at least 50" Chicago policemen belong to organization. Page 18.

Patrolman Donald Heath of the predominantly-Negro Fillmore District was termed by Conlisk to be a leader in Chicago klan activities.

Conlisk said Heath, 30, of 2055 N. Laramdale, recruited the other five policemen into the hate group.

Two others named as klan members were Fillmore District Patrolman Richard Stanton, 33, of 3530 W. 62d Pl., and Austin District Patrolman Dennis Aloia, 25, of 4949 W. Concord.

The others were not identified immediately, pending completion of questioning of them at police headquarters.

Conlisk said Stanton resigned from the force rather than submit to questioning on his klan activities.

Police Internal Inspections Division Director Raymond Clark said that Aloia, who

Turn to Page 12

an Donald Heath (left) was identified as ringleader of klansmen epartment by Supt. Conlisk at a press conference. (Sun-Times Photo)

Jail Experts Hit Johnson And Woods

Story On Page 3

Continued from Page 1

joined the force three years ago, also resigned.

The six-foot cross — of a plastic material that made it reusable for repeated burnings—was found in Heath's home, according to Conlisk.

The klan long has burned crosses to terrorize Negroes.

Also found in Heath's home were a number of semi-automatic weapons, copies of hate literature and klan pamphlets, according to Deputy Police Supt. John Mulchrone.

The confiscated material, displayed in the 12th-floor office of the IID, included an estimated 200,000 rounds of ammunition, including some of the armor-piercing variety; seven live hand grenades, which were later disarmed; a .45-caliber "grease gun" and several other rifles and pistols, and a gas mask.

Clark said the policemen had been measured for klan robes but had not yet received them.

"I am shocked that members of the Chicago Police Department belong to a hate group," said Conlisk in announcing the findings of the department's investigators.

Conlisk noted that klan membership does not violate a state law. But, he added, it is "contrary to the rules and regulations of the Chicago Police Department."

Conlisk said the four men who had not resigned would be taken before the Police Board for dismissal action.

He said the investigation is continuing to determine if other policemen belong to the klan.

Clark said that thus far the investigation indicated klan membership was "not widespread."

It was learned that the state's attorney's office entered the investigation of the police klan activities after being informed that possible criminal activities were involved.

Negroes, Roman Catholics and Jews have been the main targets of klan violence through the years.

The House Committee on Un-American Activities, summarizing two years of hearings on klan activities, said earlier this month that the organization remains "a vehicle of death, destruction and fear" in the nation.

HUAC estimated the klan's national membership at 17,000 in 18 states.

However, the Anti-Defama-

ly concerned about the image of white Chicago policemen in the eyes of the city's Negro population.

In an exclusive Sun-Times interview on Dec. 10, Conlisk told of his hopes of recruiting men "who will be more sensitive to the social problems in law enforcement."

He cited a stepped-up police human relations training program as part of an effort to maintain racial peace in Chicago.

In the same interview, Conlisk vowed a new accent on "aggressive investigation" to ferret out police wrongdoing.

The unmasking of the six policemen's klan activities was an apparent outgrowth of that program.

It appeared also that a new and closer relationship with the Federal Bureau of Investigation under Conlisk's regime figured in the klan case.

Because of the klan's history of violence, the FBI maintains surveillance over activities of its white-hooded members.

Joseph J. Le Fevour, president of the Fraternal Order of Police, Chicago Lodge No. 7, said he found it "hard to believe that any Chicago police officers could be so stupid and irrational as to belong to the Ku Klux Klan."

Le Fevour said the "ideals of professional law enforcement officers are diametrically opposed" to the "totally un - American conduct" that characterizes the klan.

"Officers of this type," Le-Fevour added, "are certainly not representative of the Chicago Police Department.